

Messages from the National Weather Service and Alabama Emergency Management Agency

For the men and women of your National Weather Service Forecast Offices, there is great pride taken in issuing severe weather warnings, and great satisfaction when people receive the warnings and take action to protect themselves. Accordingly, one of our greatest disappointments is when people fail to receive warnings or take action during severe weather. No matter where you live in Alabama, severe weather is possible year round. You need to, and "can", know if severe weather is possible days or hours in advance, develop an action plan for every situation you are in, and practice that plan before the event occurs. Let us help! Go to www.weather.gov, to learn about weather and safety, or call your local National Weather Service Office. It's only a matter of time before severe weather affects you. Will you be ready?

Jim Stefkovich, Meteorologist-in-Charge
National Weather Service, Birmingham



Within the last year, Alabama experienced very active weather patterns, from the deadly North Alabama storms to the destructive tornadoes that ripped through central Alabama, severely impacting Prattville. The dramatic images from those storms show the importance of being prepared and having a plan of action. The time to prepare is now. The theme for the 2009 Severe Weather Awareness season is "Only a Matter of Time-Are you Ready"? Alabama is an unique state that has two distinct tornado seasons. That means at all times you need to make sure you are prepared. Preparedness is not only knowing what's going on with the current weather pattern, but also having a communication plan, knowing where your safe place is in your home or business, having a three-day emergency kit, and making sure your family discusses and practices this plan. The Alabama Emergency Management Agency staff conducts a series of training programs and exercises annually to ensure we know how to respond; therefore, we are asking Alabama residents to make sure they know and practice their family plan. To learn more about being prepared, contact your local Emergency Management Agency regarding Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT) in your county. If you need assistance creating your family plan, log on to www.ema.alabama.gov.

Brock Long, Director
Alabama EMA, Clanton



Special Thanks to Our Partners

To recognize their commitment to public service and safety, the National Weather Service extends a special thanks to those contributing to the 2009 edition of the Alabama Severe Weather Awareness Week Booklet:



Severe Weather Awareness Week in Alabama is an annual public awareness campaign to draw attention to severe weather preparedness. Since its inception by the National Weather Service following the April 3-4, 1974, super-outbreak of tornadoes, this week has been observed each year as part of a continuing commitment to improve severe weather awareness. The National Weather Service has traditionally led this campaign, but additional partners have joined to improve and expand this effort to reach Alabamians with this important information.